



LEADING THE WAY

The Central Bucks Schools will provide all students with the academic and problem-solving skills essential for personal development, responsible citizenship, and life-long learning.

Dear CBSD Families,

As we head into the last weekend before a new school year, we write to remind you of the specific procedures regarding attendance.

Regular school attendance is critical for a successful school experience. Instructional continuity is interrupted when a student is frequently absent, tardy, or dismissed early from school. The district urges all parents/guardians to stress punctuality and regular attendance habits with their children.

The school laws of Pennsylvania, specifically Act 138 of 2016 and the amended Act 16, dictate the requirements for mandatory school attendance as well as procedures to follow when students are absent/tardy. These laws and procedures are reflected in CBSD School Board [Policy 204](#), which requires that every parent/guardian must elect to have their child enter school “no later than six (6) years of age until the child reaches eighteen (18) years of age,” referred to as compulsory age.

Parent/Guardian Alert About Student Absences

When your child is not in school, you will receive a text message and an email notification. The purpose of this is to ensure that you are aware that your child is not in school on a given day(s).

Excused Absence

Parents/guardians must notify the attendance office by 10:30 a.m. for elementary and 9 a.m. for secondary via Parent Portal. **Emails are not accepted.** Absences submitted through the Parent Portal will also serve as an excuse for the absence.

For extenuating circumstances in which a parent/guardian does not have internet access and must excuse their student by phone, the student must present a written excuse note within three days after returning to school that is signed by the parent/guardian and clearly indicates the reasons for the absence.

Consistent with state attendance law, the school will classify an absence as “excused” for one of the following reasons only:

- Illness
- Death in the immediate family
- Exceptionally urgent reasons
- Religious observances with prior approval
- Tutorial work
- Educational tours or trips with prior approval (not to exceed five days per school year)
- Health care (must present a doctor’s note for the absence to be medically excused)

Any absence that can be anticipated beforehand should be brought to the attention of the building principal well in advance of the absence.

Secondary students who are absent more than 20 days from any year-long course may be denied academic credit for that course. Credit for semester courses may be denied if 10 days of absence are exceeded.

In addition, students who are absent for more than 20 days may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities and/or compete in PIAA sports. Special consideration will be given to those students who are seriously ill.

Religious Observation

For full or part-time absence of a student to observe a religious holiday, it is necessary that the request be put in through the Parent Portal prior to the religious holiday(s).

Educational Tours or Trips

Requests by parents/guardians for permission to have children absent from school for educational tours or trips must be made to and processed by the principal or his/her designee. The request must be received by the principal at least 10 days prior to the anticipated absence.

The total number of approved days of absence shall not exceed five days in a given school year. Days exceeding these guidelines shall be considered unlawful and/or unexcused. The student shall be held responsible for making up missed assignments.

Unexcused or Unlawful Absences

All absences for reasons other than those cited above will be considered as “unexcused.” All “unexcused” absences for students under the age of 18 are also recorded as “unlawful.”

When a student accumulates three days of unlawful absences in a school year, the principal shall send an official “first notice” to the parent/guardian. In addition, a “School Attendance Improvement Plan” will be developed to improve student attendance.

For each incident of unlawful absence after the sixth unlawful absence, the principal or designee shall do one or more of the following: refer the child to an attendance improvement program; refer to Children and Youth; or file a truancy citation with the District Magistrate. Importantly, for students aged 18 and older, absenteeism may result in credit denial as outlined in sections above.

Cumulative Absences

Whenever a student accumulates 10 or more absences in a school year, the parent/guardian will receive an official letter stating that every absence thereafter must be medically excused by a doctor. Failure to do so will result in unexcused absences and potential truancy proceedings.

Consecutive Absences

Whenever a student has 10 consecutive absences and there is no evidence that these absences are “excused,” the district will begin the process to remove the student from its active membership roll.

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

Whenever students arrive late or depart prior to the end of the school day, parents must enter that information into the Parent Portal. These incidents are recorded as “excused” or “unexcused” applying the same criteria as those for full-day absences. Students arriving after the midpoint of the morning or departing before the midpoint of the school day will be recorded as half-day absent.

At the secondary level, this will affect the student’s ability to participate on the day of an extracurricular activity. Minutes accumulated due to tardiness or early dismissal will count towards overall attendance accounting. If significant minutes are missed, this will result in truancy proceedings and, at the secondary level, may impact the awarding of credit for a particular course missed.

Thank you in advance for following these procedures and understanding their significance. They provide for the safe and thorough delivery of our educational program and are essential to students’ security and success.